

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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5 1. A system for rebate processing, comprising:  
a plurality of first devices associated with promotion  
sponsors, the first devices operable to communicate  
information describing promotions to a rebate processing  
center;

10 a plurality of second devices associated with  
consumers, the second devices operable to communicate  
information indicating purchases of products to the rebate  
processing center; and

the rebate processing center, comprising:

15 a first memory operable to store promotion  
information describing the promotions available for the  
purchases;

a second memory operable to store transaction  
information indicating the purchases of the products; and

a processor operable to process rebate requests  
by associating the purchases with the promotions.

20 2. The system of Claim 1, wherein the promotion  
information comprises a plurality of disbursement options  
for receiving an authorized rebate.

3. The system of Claim 1, wherein:

25 the promotion information comprises a plurality of  
promotions indexed by promotion identifiers; and

the transaction information comprises a plurality of  
transactions, each transaction having at least one  
promotion identifier.

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4. The system of Claim 1, wherein the second devices are further operable to output a rebate request form in a format suitable for mailing.

5. The system of Claim 1, wherein at least one first device is operable to receive a status of promotions comprising a number of rebate requests and a breakage rate for each promotion associated with a promotion sponsor.

6. The system of Claim 1, wherein at least one second device is operable to receive a status of rebate requests submitted to the rebate processing center by a user of the second device.

7. The system of Claim 1, wherein at least one second device is operable to receive an authorization upon approval of a rebate request, the authorization having a plurality of selectable disbursement options.

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8. An apparatus for rebate processing, comprising:  
a first memory operable to store promotion  
information describing a plurality of promotions;  
a second memory operable to store transaction  
information indicating a plurality of product purchases; and  
a processor operable to process rebate requests by  
associating the product purchases with the promotions.

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9. The apparatus of Claim 8, further comprising an  
interface operable:

to receive promotion information from a plurality of  
promotion sponsors describing the promotions;  
to receive transaction information from a plurality of  
consumers indicating the product purchases.

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10. The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the interface is  
operable to receive information electronically using the  
Internet.

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11. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the interface is  
operable to receive transaction information entered from a  
rebate request form mailed by a purchaser of a product.

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12. The apparatus of Claim 8, further comprising an  
interface operable to communicate a status of promotions  
associated with a promotion sponsor in response to a request  
from the promotion sponsor.

Sub B4 → 13. The apparatus of Claim 8, further comprising an interface operable to communicate a status of promotions associated with a promotion sponsor, the status comprising a number of rebate requests and a breakage rate for each promotion associated with the promotion sponsor.

14. The apparatus of Claim 8, further comprising an interface to communicate an authorization to a consumer upon approving a rebate request, the authorization having a plurality of selectable disbursement options.

15. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein:  
each promotion comprises a promotion identifier; and  
each transaction comprises a transaction identifier and an associated promotion identifier.

Sub B5 → 16. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein at least one promotion comprises:  
a product identifier; and  
a plurality of disbursement options for receiving an authorized rebate.

17. The apparatus of Claim 16, wherein the disbursement options comprise a cash rebate and a credit voucher.

18. The apparatus of Claim 16, wherein at least one promotion comprises:  
a product identifier;  
an end date for the promotion; and  
a geographic target for the promotion.

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and

19. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein at least one transaction comprises:

a promotion identifier;

personal information of the purchaser of the product;

purchase information.

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20. A method for rebate processing, comprising:  
storing promotion information describing a  
plurality of promotions;  
storing transaction information indicating a  
5 plurality of product purchases; and  
processing rebate requests by associating the  
product purchases with the promotions.

10 21. The method of Claim 20, further comprising:  
receiving, from a plurality of promotion sponsors,  
promotion information describing the promotions; and  
receiving, from a plurality of consumers, transaction  
information indicating the product purchases.

15 22. The method of Claim 21, wherein the steps of  
receiving are performed electronically using the Internet.

20 23. The method of Claim 21, further comprising the  
step of receiving transaction information entered from a  
rebate request form mailed by a purchaser of a product.

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25 24. The method of Claim 21, further comprising:  
receiving a request from a promotion sponsor for a  
status of promotions associated with the promotion sponsor;  
and  
communicating the status of promotions associated with  
the promotion sponsor.

30 25. The method of Claim 24, wherein the status of  
promotions comprises a number of rebate requests and a  
breakage rate for each promotion associated with the  
promotion sponsor.

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26. The method of Claim 20, further comprising:  
approving a rebate request;  
communicating an authorization to a consumer upon  
approving the rebate request, the authorization having a  
5 plurality of disbursement options; and  
receiving a selection of the disbursement options.

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27. The method of Claim 20, wherein:  
each promotion comprises a promotion identifier; and  
each transaction comprises a transaction identifier and  
an associated promotion identifier.

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28. The method of Claim 20, wherein at least one  
promotion comprises:  
a product identifier; and  
a plurality of disbursement options for receiving an  
authorized rebate.

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29. The method of Claim 28, wherein the disbursement  
options comprise a cash rebate and a credit voucher.

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30. The method of Claim 20, wherein at least one  
promotion comprises:  
a product identifier;  
an end date for the promotion; and  
a geographic target for the promotion.

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31. The method of Claim 20, wherein at least one transaction comprises:

a promotion identifier;

personal information of the purchaser of the product;

5 and

purchase information.



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32. A computer-based interface for facilitating rebate processing, the interface operable to:

display a plurality of fields for entry by a user to create a promotion for a product bearing a rebate;

5 receive promotion information for the promotion;

communicate promotion information to a remote rebate processing center; and

receive a status of the promotion based on purchases of the product.

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33. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein promotion information comprises:

a product identifier; and

15 a plurality of disbursement options for receiving an authorized rebate.

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34. The computer-based interface of Claim 33, wherein the disbursement options comprise a cash rebate and a credit voucher.

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35. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein promotion information comprises:

a product identifier;

an end date for the promotion; and

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a geographic target for the promotion.

36. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein the interface is operable to receive and communicate promotion information repeatedly to create a plurality of promotions for the remote rebate processing center.

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37. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein the interface is web-based and is further operable to communicate promotion information and receive a status of the promotion electronically using the Internet.

38. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein the status of the promotion comprises:

- a number of rebate requests; and
- a breakage rate.

39. The computer-based interface of Claim 32, wherein the status of the promotion comprises:

- a number of rebate requests; and
- a number of authorized rebates fulfilled for each of a plurality of disbursement options for the promotion.